

T&CVA 2014 Annual Wine Challenge Results

The 2014 Wine Challenge was held at Marlow Winery on Sunday September 14th 2014. 44 wines from 13 vineyards were entered from the Region – our best ever turnout both in numbers of wines and vineyards – this reflects that some of the newly planted vineyards in the region started producing for the first time this year.

Award	For	Winner
Mac Mackinnon Trophy	Best White Wine in any Class	Stanlake Park Fume, 2011
Sparkling Wine Trophy	Best Sparkling Wine (any colour)	Wyfold Vineyard, 2010
Emmbrook Cup	Best Red Wine	Brightwell Vineyard, Regatta 2011
T&CVA Decanter	Best Wine Overall	Wyfold Vineyard, 2010
Stefanowicz salver	Best still rose wine	Linch Hill Vineyard, Oxford Rose 2013
Anne Howitt Shield	Best Non-Commercial Wine	Vernon Lodge, 2012



The Judges



The Winners



Stanlake Park – Mackinnon Trophy

English Wine Festival in Oxford

200 people attended the English Wine Festival at the Oxford Union in Oxford on June 7th 2014 where members of the public were able to taste almost 200 Award-Winning English & Welsh Wines from the UKVA National Wine Competition 2014 held over the previous two days at Balliol College, Oxford. Despite torrential rain and thunder at the start of the event, attendees were able to sample all these wonderful wines sitting in the sunshine of the courtyard at The Oxford Union later in the day and were able to purchase local T&CVA wines to take home with them.

National Wine Competition – the heat is on!

Vineyards from all over the UK are rushing to put forward their best hopes into the UK Vineyards Association Wine of the Year Competition. After a complex, and at times trying 2013 vintage, the industry has landed on its feet with record-breaking harvest figures, and good quality to match.

The wines will be judged over the next two weeks behind closed doors in Oxford, but members of the public will be able to sample the submissions at the English Wine Festival, to be held at The Oxford Union on Saturday 7 June (11 am - 6 pm). NOTE VENUE CHANGE (previously publicized as Balliol College). Tickets will now cost £7, which will include tastings samples.

For the first time, the City of Oxford will play host to the UK Vineyards Association Wine of the Year Competition in which hundreds of English and Welsh wines will vie for recognition and glory.

The people of Oxford will then be treated to a rare opportunity to taste for themselves over 100 of the award-winning wines to emerge from the competition, as part of the English Wine Festival. Only the very best wines from the competition will be offered for tasting during the Festival.

At the English Wine Festival, the public can also meet winemakers, growers and even a Master of Wine specializing in the English Wines and learn more about the grape varieties that do well in our climate. Wines produced in the Thames and Chilterns region will also be available to taste and to buy.

The UK Wine of the Year Competition, run by the UK Vineyards Association, will be held behind closed doors in the run-up to the English Wine Festival. This competition is unique in the world because all the judges are Masters of Wine, wine experts who have received the highest qualification in their field.



Thames & Chilterns
Vineyards Association

NEW VENUE!

ENGLISH WINE FESTIVAL & UK COMPETITION TASTING

The Oxford Union, Frewin Ct, Oxford OX1 3JB
Saturday 7th June 2014
11:00 – 18:00
£7 entry (pay on the door) includes tasting samples, entrance on St Michaels Street

Over 100 award-winning English and Welsh wines available to taste and some to purchase

For further details, please contact:
Denise Santilli, 07721 744020
horsesec@thameschilternsvineyards.org.uk
Please drink responsibly www.drinkaware.co.uk

www.thameschilternsvineyards.org.uk



Oxford Union

Hundred Hills Vineyard

Stephen and Fiona Duckett have planted 61,000 vines already at their new vineyard near Pishill, and are planning to produce top quality sparkling English Wine. We warmly welcome them to the T&CVA and wish them great success with their vineyard

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What a corker: the Ducketts' vineyard at Bank Farm in Pishill, where the soil quality and weather are said to be similar to that of the Champagne region in France

Couple's £2m dream of wine to rival champagne

By JAMES BURTON
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A COUPLE are hoping to produce a sparkling wine in South Oxfordshire of the same quality as champagne.

Stephen and Fiona Duckett planted their first grape crop at Bank Farm in Pishill last year after receiving planning permission to convert it into a vineyard and winery at a cost of £1million.

They hope to start production next year if South Oxfordshire District Council approves some minor changes to the original plans, meaning their first wine could be ready for sale by 2019 and they could be producing 125,000 bottles a year by 2025.

The couple, who have consulted experts from the Champagne region of France, say their land is one of few places in this country that will result in a high-end product.

They plan to plant more than 67,000 Chardonnay and Pinot Noir vines at the 50-acre farm.

Up to 10 full-time jobs will be created, including an agricultural manager, a winery supervisor, a chief winemaker and an assistant winemaker. Casual labour will also be needed at harvest time as the grapes will be hand-picked.

Mr and Mrs Duckett bought the farm in February 2013 after selling their house in Oxford.

Their business will be called Hundred Hills as it is located in the former Pyton Hundred, an area of land recorded in the Domesday Book.

The couple are funding the venture themselves and will be in charge of sales and marketing. They will sell wine to specialist retailers, restaurants and individuals buyers, although there will not be a shop on site.

They also plan to offer tours and wine-tasting sessions and hope to host community events.

The Ducketts, who expect it will cost them £750,000 to bring their first crop to harvest, plan to keep the Grade II listed 19th century farmhouse, restoring the original windows and chimney stack as well as a barn and granary which are also listed.

They want to demolish several modern extensions and outbuildings and build the winery and a second house, where they will live, with a chalk cellar and a series of barns for hospitality, storage and administration.

The farmhouse would be used as temporary accommodation for staff and visitors.

The entrance to the site will be landscaped with two courtyards, a car park, a pond, lawns and shrubs. Mr and Mrs Duckett, who have been married for 20 years, met while studying at Oxford University and



Bubbling with excitement: Stephen and Fiona Duckett, who plan to plant more than 67,000 vines

previously worked in the IT and pharmaceutical industries.

They decided they wanted to create a vineyard about five years ago and visited more than 100 places before choosing Bank Farm.

Mr Duckett, 47, whose family run a dairy farm in Somerset, said: "We were very taken with the idea of trying something different."

"It's certainly a big risk for us but we are in it for the long run. We are thinking at least 20 years ahead."

"We hope to create something that will eventually rival the grands crus of Champagne but that's very much a long-term ambition."

"There are some really great English sparkling wines on the market and the climate here is not too dissimilar from the Champagne region."

"People here only became aware of that in the mid-Nineties but now some English wineries are winning international awards. We are very influenced by what's been happening in the Napa valley in California. With

real energy, care and investment, it has gone on to create some of the world's finest wines."

"It struck me that, given the right approach, it should be possible to achieve the same thing over here."

"The past few years have been the warmest on record and last summer was a fantastic time to be planting our first vines. In fact, the conditions were better over here than they were in Champagne."

"Only 50 out of more than 60,000 vines didn't survive and that means they've laid a strong root system for future years. The best grapes always come from the limits of where they are able to grow and southern England is now at that point."

"We're feeling as good as we can about it at this stage. There will be good and bad years and there are a lot of things we need to get right."

"However, we are working with some great advisors and with their help I believe we will be able to create an extremely high-quality product. I never thought I'd be able

to do this in England in my lifetime but the conditions are perfect and I'm sure we will see many more vineyards springing up in years to come."

"We're very excited about the future but realise success will happen slowly."

Mr Duckett says the venture will bring benefits to the community, especially employment and tourism.

"Much of the process must be carried out by hand so we will need a lot of people to do a lot of different jobs," he said.

"It will also attract more tourists to the area. We already get a lot of walkers departing from their routes to have a look at what we're up to."

He says the couple have received support from locals.

"Some have even sent unprompted letters of support to the district council," he said. "About 200 people came to watch us planting the first crop so we gave them a glass of wine and talked to them about the process, which they really enjoyed."

In their first planning application, the Ducketts said the winemaking process was "essentially silent, largely relying on gravity to move the wine from pressing to bottling."

The business would generate "insignificant" traffic movements because the grapes would be processed on site.

Dr Michel Salgues, the couple's consultant, said the soil was as good as the best sites in Champagne as it had just the right mixture of chalk and lime and the weather had been similar to France's in the past decade.

The farm was also sheltered from frosts and winds because it lies in a shallow valley.

Dr Salgues said: "Experts who have looked at the proposed site are excited at the prospect of what they believe will prove to be one of the very best sites in the world."

Nathaniel Litchfield & Partners, the Ducketts' planning agent, said: "These proposals cannot simply be developed anywhere and it is unusual to find such a site in South Oxfordshire."

"Once operational, the vineyard will be one of the largest family-owned single vineyard winemaking operations in England."

"It will enable world-class specialists to come to the area and train local people, bringing highly-valued skills and expertise."

Pishill with Stonor Parish Council has recommended the latest plans are approved, saying the business would be "a good asset" for the community.

The district council was expected to make a decision by the end of last month but this has been delayed due to the recent fire at its offices in Crommarsh Gifford.

Award-winning vintages

SEVERAL wineries in the Henley area have been acclaimed for their produce.

In 2013 the Duchess of Cornwall praised the wines and liqueurs of the Chiltern Valley Winery and Brewery in Hambleden. She and Prince Charles were among 60,000 visitors to the Coronation Festival at Buckingham Palace, where the business was a stallholder.

Chiltern Valley was founded by David Ealand in 1980 and is managed by his son Donald. It is the only winery to hold a royal warrant.

Earlier that year, Laitlwalte's Wine won the Judgement of Pearson's Green award with its 2009 Wyfold Vineyard Sparkling Wine, seeing off competition from 75 other English sparkling wines, one from California and three champagnes.

The one-and-a-half acre vineyard is owned by Barbara Laitlwalte, from Peppard Common and Cherry Thompson, from Wyfold. It was founded in 2003 and produced its first harvest three years later.

In 2011 the Oaken Grove Vineyard in Easley won gold in the English and Welsh Wine of the Year competition for its rosé, called Benham Blush.

Other nearby vineyards include Fawley Vineyard and Pheasants' Ridge, near Hambleden.